

CLAIMS

1. A method for tracking the maximum power point of a solar panel, comprising:
 - (a) providing a pulsewidth modulated (PWM) DC/DC converter between the output of said panel and a load, and
 - 5 (b) introducing a perturbation into a switching parameter of said converter.
2. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said parameter is the duty cycle of at least one switching device in the converter.
- 10 3. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said parameter is the switching frequency of at least one switching device in the converter.
4. Apparatus for tracking the maximum power point of a solar panel, comprising:
 - 15 (a) a PWM DC/DC converter between the output of the solar panel and a load, and
 - (b) means for introducing a perturbation into a switching parameter of said converter.
- 20 5. Apparatus as claimed in claim 4 wherein said converter operates in switching mode and said perturbation means comprises means for introducing a perturbation into the duty cycle of at least one switching device of said converter.

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6. Apparatus as claimed in claim 4 wherein said converter operates in switching mode and said perturbation means comprises means for introducing a perturbation into the switching frequency of at least one switching device of said converter.
7. Apparatus as claimed in claim 4 wherein said converter is a SEPIC or Cuk converter.